

Merrymeeting Trail Board of Supervisors

February 11, 2022

Commissioner Bruce Van Note
Maine Department of Transportation
16 SHS, Augusta, ME 04333-0016

Re: Lower Road Rail Corridor Use Advisory Council

Dear Commissioner Van Note,

I hope this finds you well.

On December 16, 2021, the Merrymeeting Trail Board of Supervisors voted to formally request that the Maine Department of Transportation (MDOT) form a Rail Corridor Use Advisory Council to explore using the relevant unused section of the Lower Road railroad corridor as the Merrymeeting Trail, pursuant to Title 23 MRSA §75. The minutes from that meeting are enclosed.

I am also enclosing letters from the four municipalities we represent – Topsham, Bowdoinham, Richmond, and Gardner – each requesting MDOT initiate the Rail Corridor Use Advisory Council process for this corridor. Additionally, we have included a letter making this same request from the Kennebec River Rail Trail Board of Supervisors, which represents the northern communities along the Lower Road (Gardiner, Farmingdale, Hallowell, and Augusta).

Thank you for considering our request. Please feel welcome to call on the Merrymeeting Trail Board of Supervisors with any questions or for any assistance we may be able to provide throughout this process.

Sincerely,



Jeremy Cluchey
Chair, Merrymeeting Trail Board of Supervisors

15 Brickyard Way
Bowdoinham, ME 04008
207-233-2795

**Merrymeeting Trail Board of Supervisors
December 16, 2021
Meeting Minutes**

The meeting convened at Richmond Town Office.

Attending:

- Darryl Sterling, Dir. of Community & Bus. Devt., Richmond
- Jeremy Cluchey, Selectman, Bowdoinham, Board Chair
- Tom Reeves, Gardiner resident
- Victor Langelo, Topsham resident, Secretary



Meeting called to order at 4:10 pm

Jeremy shared that all four towns have pass a resolution requesting that MDOT create a Rail Corridor Use Advisory Council. There being a member present from each town and a majority of the current members, we agreed that a quorum was present. All those present agreed that we should proceed.

Jeremy moved the following resolution:

“The Merrymeeting Trail Board of Supervisors hereby petitions the Maine Department of Transportation to create a Rail Corridor Use Advisory Council to consider future use of the Lower Road Corridor from Rockland Junction in Brunswick to the east side of the railroad bridge in Augusta as a bikeway or trail.”

Darryl seconded the motion. Motion passed with all members present voting in the affirmative.

Prior to the meeting, Matt Nixon agreed to get a letter from the Topsham Select Board saying they passed a similar resolution. Jeremy asked Darryl to secure a letter from Richmond stating that the Select Board passed a similar resolution. Tom will contact the Gardiner town manager to arrange for a letter stating they also passed a similar resolution. Early next year we are hoping for a supporting resolution from the Kennebec River Rail Trail Board of Supervisors. After which the board will forward our request and supporting letters from the towns and KRRT Board of Supervisors to the Maine Department of Transportation.

The board discussed setting a tentative monthly meeting schedule. Jeremy will reach out to all members to see if the last Wednesday of the month will work for everyone.

Meeting adjourned 4:26 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Victor Langelo, Secretary

TOWN OF TOPSHAM, MAINE



Office of the Town Manager
100 Main Street
Topsham, Maine 04086
Telephone: (207) 725-5821
FAX: (207) 725-1731
Website: www.topshammaine.com

The Topsham Select Board hereby resolves to request that the Maine Department of Transportation create a Rail Use Advisory Council to consider future use of the Lower Road Corridor from Rockland Junction in Brunswick to the east side of the railroad bridge in Augusta as a "multiuse trail" or "rail and trail" system."

December 2, 2021 voted unanimously

Town of Topsham Select Board

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "David Douglass", written over a horizontal line.

David Douglass
Chair

Roland Tufts
Vice-Chair

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Matthew Nixon", written over a horizontal line.

Matthew Nixon
Member

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Marie Brilliant", written over a horizontal line.

Marie Brilliant
Member

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Ruth Lyons", written over a horizontal line.

Ruth Lyons
Member



Town of Bowdoinham

13 School St • Bowdoinham, ME 04008

Phone 666-5531 • Fax 666-5532

www.bowdoinham.com

Nicole Briand, Town Manager

December 8, 2021

Merrymeeting Trail Board of Supervisors,

We want to thank you for your time and for keeping us updated on this project. On November 9th the Select Board unanimously approved the petition for Merrymeeting Trail project with the motion that follows:

The Board hereby petitions the Maine Department of Transportation to create a Rail Corridor use Advisory Council to consider future use of the Lower Road Corridor from Rockland Junction in Brunswick to the east side of the Railroad Bridge in Augusta as a bikeway or trail.

We look forward to seeing this project move forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nicole Briand".

Nicole Briand
Town Manager
Town of Bowdoinham
13 School St
Bowdoinham, ME 04008
Ph (207) 666-5531



TOWN OF RICHMOND

26 Gardiner Street
Richmond, ME 04357-0159
(207) 737-4305 ext. 203 (Phone)
(207) 737-4306 (Fax)
www.richmondmaine.com

December 20, 2021

Attn Merrymeeting Trail Board of Supervisors:

Thank you for your time and diligence on pursuing this project. At the November 15th Selectboard meeting the vote was unanimous to approve the petition for the Merrymeeting Trail project, the motion as follows:

Selectman York made a motion to move that the Town of Richmond hereby petitions the Maine Department of Transportation to create a Rail Corridor Use Advisory Council to consider future use of the Lower Road Corridor from Rockland Junction in Brunswick to the east side of the railroad bridge in Augusta as a bikeway or trail. Selectman Alexander seconded; motion passed (4-0).

We are hopeful that this project will move forward. Please let me know if you need any further assistance in this process.

Sincerely,

Laurisa A. Loon
Town Manager

cc: Darryl Sterling, Economic Development Director



January 25, 2022

Mr. Cluchey,

I am pleased to tell you that the Gardiner City Council moved to petition the Maine Department of Transportation to create a Rail Corridor Use Advisory Council. This motion passed.

The excerpt from the draft minutes may be seen below; please note that I annotated it by adding first names of all who are mentioned in the draft minutes:

Action: Councilor (Marc) Rines moved to petition the Maine Department of Transportation to create a Rail Corridor Use Advisory Council.

Councilor (Colin) Frey seconded.

Mayor (Patricia) Hart asked for any discussion.

Councilor (Terry) Berry thanked Tom (Reeves) for coming before council.

All those in favor. 7 yes, Councilor (Terry) Berry abstained

The City of Gardiner sits in a strategic place for this trail to continue and sees such a potential for economic development when the trail becomes a reality.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you need any other information or if we can do anything to move this project along.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anne C. Davis".

Acting City Manager
Gardiner, Maine
207-582-4200

Kennebec River Rail Trail

Board of Supervisors

16 Cony Street
Augusta, Maine 04330

February 7, 2022

Earl Kingsbury, Augusta
Lesley Jones, Augusta
William Allen, Hallowell
Chris Buck, Hallowell
Wayne Kilgore, Farmingdale
Brad Howard, Farmingdale
Philip Garwood, Gardiner
Jerry Douglass, Gardiner
Duane Scott, KRRT Friends

To: Bruce Van Note, Commissioner, MDOT

Dear Mr. Commissioner,

The Board of Supervisors of the Kennebec River Rail Trail (KRRT) is charged with building and maintaining the KRRT. We believe that collaboration and connection with other multi-use trail efforts in the region is in the long-term interest of the KRRT and the area communities. We recently became aware of the enactment PL 139 in 2021 by the 130th legislature regarding MDOT and railroad corridors.

The KRRT Board of Supervisors has considered and passed a motion on February 7, 2022 to submit a petition for your consideration. Our petition is as follows:

PETITION:

The Kennebec River Rail Trail Board of Supervisors hereby petitions the Maine Department of Transportation to create a Rail Corridor Use Advisory Council to consider future use of the Lower Road Corridor from Rockland Junction in Brunswick to the east side of the railroad bridge in Augusta as a bikeway or trail.

Thank you for your consideration,

Phil Garwood, Chairperson, KRRT BOS

